

THE 5 SECOND GOAL

IN ONE of the most incident-packed matches I have seen for years, Wycombe Wanderers were presented with a goal after only FIVE SECONDS, went 2-0 up after three minutes, 3-0 up after six minutes and were then leading 4-0 with just 17 minutes gone in Saturday's Berks and Bucks Senior Cup semi-final.

As if that wasn't enough, opponents Chesham United hit back to 4-2, missed a penalty which was taken again and saved and then had Ken Gregory stretched off with a broken leg. In between times, the game was held up while broken glass was cleared from the Chesham goalmouth. This totted up to 13 minutes of additional time at the end of 90 minutes.

I suppose we should have

known it was going to be one of those games when Wanderers scored straight from the kick-off. The ball was played back to Keith Mead who, as usual, thumped it downfield into

fastest goal on record is held jointly by Albert Mundy of Aldershot in 1958 and Keith Smith of Crystal Palace in 1964. Both scored after only six seconds.

This was certainly one of the quickest on record but that is

Chesham Utd. 2, Wycombe Wanderers 4 REPORT BY STUART EARP

the penalty area. It bounced once and full-back Pete Johnson did the obvious thing in nodding it back to his goalkeeper. Johnson couldn't have realised that Keith Collman had come off his line however, and the ball rolled agonisingly over the goalline for one of the quickest goals in the history of the game.

It might even be the quickest ever for the Guinness Book of Records states: "The fastest goal on record was one variously claimed to be from four to 13 seconds after the kick-off by Jim Fryatt of Bradford in a Fourth Division match against Tranmere Rovers at Park Avenue on April 25, 1964."

Other sources reveal that the

small consolation to poor Johnson who used to play in local football for Stokenchurch.

The effect it had on Chesham was remarkable. Completely unnerved, they quivered every time Wycombe went forward and the defence cracked again after three minutes. Dave Alexander floated a corner into the box where Dave Bullock headed on to the far post. Keith Mead picked up the loose ball and drove home past two players on the line.

Three minutes later it was an incredible 3-0. The ball was played through to Tony Horseman who beat one defender and was then faced by two more. But Chesham were in such a state of nerves that the two defenders got in each other's way and allowed Horseman to

run on and beat Collman with a low drive from 12 yards.

Wycombe could never have imagined they would have been 3-0 up after six minutes, even in their wildest dreams. Indeed, they were worried about starting the match at all due to a long list of injuries. They had to call up Graham Mackenzie from college to play in midfield while goalkeeper John Maskell was one of the two substitutes. Several of the side played with injuries, among them Paul Birdseye, Tony Horseman and the other sub Geoff Anthony.

Chesham stemmed the flood for a while and even created an attack of their own after 13 minutes. But four minutes later they were shattered a fourth time as Wanderers found the back of the net yet again. This came from another Alexander corner which Horseman nodded on to Mead. He squared the ball across the box to Mackenzie who celebrated his return with a swerving shot that took a deflection as it roared past the unfortunate Collman.

The crowd could hardly believe all these goings on and there was a strange hush over the ground for the first 20 minutes. I suspect most of them were admiring Wycombe's fluid attacking football which stretched the home defence beyond its limits. With both full backs overlapping in acres of space on the flanks, the central defenders had to cope with a barrage of crosses.

Chesham deserve the greatest credit for fighting their way back into a game that seemed well and truly lost. Inspired by Dave Le Sage, they rallied bravely and had they taken two good chances in quick succession, they could have been right back in the game. The first came after 29 minutes when Le Sage came forward from the back, played a one-two and set up Stewart Atkins. Chesham's leading marksman (he has scored 32 goals this term) hit his shot well but Peter Spittle pushed the ball up and Birdseye cleared off the line.

A few minutes later Gregory drove hard and low across goal and with Wycombe's defence in a tangle, Stan Marshall was just too late with a lunge at the far post from two yards.

A third chance in the 34th minute was taken by Vince Faulkner, a Wycombe player for several seasons in the past. He leapt high above everyone else to ram home a fine header from Gregory's free kick.

The goal did Chesham's confidence the world of good. They began to string together some neat attacks which gave them fresh hope for the second half.

In a bid for more goals,

Chesham boss Brendan McNally played four men up front and only three at the back in the second half. Ian Hornby replaced the injured Le Sage while Barry Cooper switched to full back and Gregory moved into a forward role. The move worked well as Chesham began the half in great style, taking the game to Wycombe and winning two dangerous free kicks on the edge of the box.

Then after 67 minutes, Chesham snatched a second vital goal. Marshall was the scorer, running onto Gregory's nicely judged pass and lobbing the ball over the oncoming Spittle. Gregory could have made it 4-3 a minute later but his shot lacked power.

Had it not been for Wycombe's offside trap, Chesham might have been even more dangerous but at the same time they left themselves exposed at the back with only three defenders.

Anthony replaced Alexander after 74 minutes, and at the same time the game was held up for several minutes while glass was cleared from the Chesham goalmouth. A pint mug had been thrown into the goal but no warning was issued to the offenders.

Johnson, who suffered a bad knock on the bridge of the nose earlier in the game, had to leave the field in the 78th minute after another bang on the head, to be replaced by Phil Sewell.

Wanderers seemed to have weathered the Chesham revival when United were awarded a penalty in the 88th minute. It came from a goalmouth scramble. Gregory worked his way into the box and fired in a shot which Spittle blocked with his body. Atkins also saw his effort blocked in the mêlée which finally ended up with Spittle bravely diving on the ball. Burnham referee Peter Wrennell then awarded a penalty for an offence which few were able to fathom. At the same time, Gregory was lying prostrate on the ground with a broken leg.

I could not see what caused Gregory's tragic injury but the referee told me afterwards that the penalty was awarded for shirt pulling during the scramble and had nothing to do with the injury. After some five minutes the unfortunate Gregory was stretchered off the field and Bobby Harper stepped up to take the penalty which would have set the match alight in the closing minutes.

But Harper ballooned the ball high over the crowd onto the neighbouring cricket field. Mr. Wrennell was not satisfied, however, and ordered the kick to be re-taken as Spittle had moved. This time Atkins took a short run at the ball and struck it well to Spittle's right. The Wycombe keeper seemed to have no chance but launched himself superbly to hold the shot — a marvellous save.

That miss took most of the heart out of Chesham and in those additional 13 minutes, they were unable to threaten Wycombe again.

The Blues now go forward to yet another final where they will meet the winners of the Hungerford v Slough semi-final. Whatever happens, we are unlikely to see such an amazing match again!

CHESHAM: K. Collman; K. Gregory, D. Le Sage (sub. I. Hornby 45 mins.), V. Faulkner, P. Johnson (sub. P. Sewell 78 mins.); B. Cooper, A. Cameron, K. Beaven; S. Atkins, R. Harper, S. Marshall.
WYCOMBE: P. Spittle; P. Birdseye, K. Mead, D. Bullock, R. Eaton; D. Alexander (sub. G. Anthony 74 mins.), G. Mackenzie, H. Kennedy; M. Hollifield, A. Horseman, D. Evans. Sub. J. Maskell (not used).

Referee: P. Wrennell (Burnham).
Half-time: 1-4. **Goalscorers:** Wycombe — Johnson o.g. (5 sec.), Mead (3), Horseman (6), Mackenzie (17), Chesham — Faulkner (34), Marshall (67).

Official attendance: 1,600.



Wycombe Wanderers bearded midfielder Dave Alexander fires a shot just wide as Chesham goalkeeper Keith Collman tries to intercept during Saturday's incident-packed Berks and Bucks Senior Cup semi-final.



A dangerous moment in the Chesham penalty area as Dave Bullock gets up well to a corner in Saturday's County Cup semi-final.